

# Safety Topics

Volume 02, Issue 1

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*Special points of interest:*

- The error of my ways was pointed out! Last month I talked about braking in icy conditions. Those tips applied to most personal vehicles and not to Ready-Mix trucks. Pumping the brakes may bleed off the air and cause the loss of all braking. Apply the rules I offered to your personal vehicle! Now I know that someone is reading my Safety Topics. Thanks!
- Area Codes for northern Indiana are changing. Northeast Indiana will be going to **260** from 219 effective in mid January. Soon you will have to use **260** instead of 219 to call my office number.

*For what it is worth!*

*Often times, when a door of opportunity closes another one opens. Don't spend so much time looking at the closed door that you miss the door that has been opened!*

## Working or Playing in Cold Weather

Winter may be a welcome escape from the heat and humid of summer, but winter weather can be dangerous. Appropriate *personal protective equipment* is required. The PPE referred to here are hats, gloves, and boots.

- Frostbite is the freezing of flesh that is exposed to the cold. Frostbite can be mild and cause discomfort or it can be severe and result in the destruction of body tissue. The parts of the body most likely to be frostbitten are your nose, cheeks, ears, toes, and fingers
- Hypothermia is the loss of body heat due to prolonged exposure to the cold. Hypothermia is a life-threatening condition. Body heat is lost more rapidly when clothes are wet. When working hard enough to sweat, it is important to have dry outer clothing to put on when you

take a break. A hat is needed to prevent heat loss through the top of your head.

Your risk of cold-related injury increases with: high winds, inadequate or improper clothing, physical exhaustion, dehydration, use of alcohol, and certain medical conditions such as circulatory problems or diabetes.

Make sure that you plan to take appropriate personal protective equipment with you when you work or play outside this winter. Make sure that you have winter emergency items in your vehicle before taking off. In addition to hats, gloves, boots and coats, you may need blankets, water, and snacks. A shovel, something for traction, and jumper cables are important as well. A little pre-planning is always in style!

## Jump Starting and Battery Charging

Jump starting and battery charging are operations that are more dangerous than most people think. When jump starting a wet cell battery, hydrogen gas is created. The flammable nature of hydrogen gas could cause a violent explosion if it is exposed to an ignition source, such as a cigarette or spark from the jumper cables. This explosion has the ability to damage expensive equipment and send battery acid and fragments into the surrounding area. Proper care and technique should be used when jump starting or charging any battery.

- **When jump starting vehicle-to-vehicle**
  - Make sure the vehicles do not touch.
  - Both vehicles must be in park or neutral.
  - The wheels of both vehicles should be chocked.
  - Turn all the accessories, including the engines, off.
  - Always wear eye protection.
  - Make sure the batteries are the same voltage.
  - Check the fluids in both batteries. If they are low, add water (when possible).
  - If the batteries have removable vent caps, remove the caps and cover the holes with a damp cloth.

- **Connecting the Jumper Cables**

- Connect one cable, usually the red cable, to the positive terminal (+ or red) on the good battery
- Next attach the other end of the same cable to the positive terminal (+ or red) on the dead battery.

- Now connect the other cable, usually black, to the negative (- or NEG) terminal of the good battery.

- Finally connect the other end of the black cable to a good metal ground on the engine block or chassis of stalled vehicle. Keep the connection as far away from the battery as possible.

- **NOTE: In some trucks, the batteries have POSITIVE ground. You must carefully read the battery markings before you connect the jumper cables.**

- After the dead vehicle has been started, disconnect the jumper cables in the reverse order from which they were connected.

# Safety Topics - Cold Weather Protection & Battery Charging

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*These Safety Topics are an attempt at continuing education. Please read the information and let me know if you have an idea for future Topics. Your input is appreciated!*

Plant Location: \_\_\_\_\_

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Supervisor/Foreman/Plant Manager Signature:

**Names of those who reviewed this information:**

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